

# Navigating Family Engagement Today

## Schedules/Routines: Part 3

This installment of *Navigating Family Engagement Today* concludes the series on schedules and routines. It includes suggestions about **5 Key Elements** for your schedule.

### 1. LEARNING TIME

If your child's school provides academic work, that is a priority. Consider breaking up the day so they aren't doing all their work at once.

If your school doesn't provide work, and you have Internet access, there are many apps for phones/tablets and websites with learning activities. If you don't have Internet access, you can get age-appropriate math and reading workbooks from books stores, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, from teachers you may know, from friends, or even little free libraries that may be in your area.

Whether you get work from school or not, set time for reading, reading, reading! It almost doesn't matter what the children read (as long as it is age-appropriate). Just have them read. If they like what they read, all the better. Reading to children and reading aloud as a family with everyone taking turns are great options, too.

Here is one idea: Have each family member keep a journal to record their thoughts, feelings, and ideas about how they are reacting to major changes in their lives. Write, draw, or even record the journal. Writing can help us cope. At the end of the week, the family can share what they have written and talk about it.

### 2. SOCIAL TIME

In school, children interact with each other in class, at lunch, at recess, etc. Be sure to schedule time for this. Children can interact with their friends on Skype, FaceTime, or by phone. They can even do schoolwork or play together this way.

### 3. EXERCISE

Set aside time for "moving." Depending of the weather, a walk outside may work well. Otherwise, children can walk around the house, dance, do various exercises –even yoga – or play games like Twister. Do you have a hula hoop?

### 4. FAMILY TIME

Are there activities that you never have time for like teaching the children to cook (plan meals together), sew, do laundry. Can they help with home repairs? Fixing the car? Do you have hobbies they could learn to do with you? Sing together. Do art.

### 5. PLAY/FUN

Children need down time. Play is crucial to their development. This can include things like Legos, blocks, games, "imagination", or just "free time." If they have siblings, what they can do together and separately? Don't discount screens. We often hear that kids spend too much time on screens, but screens could be a reward for doing other things on the schedule. Check in on your kids and monitor their screens.

We hope you find these suggestions helpful. We are committed to finding ways to help everyone thrive during these times. Watch for additional thoughts and suggestions that we hope will help make this time at home creative, meaningful, and a time where all family members find comfort in each other. Some sample schedules are included below.

